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His collection of monstrosities is a sad one; and worse still, it might have been enlarged to almost any extent. Examples such as these—and those expressions which the consent of the fifty authors is held to justify are in nowise a distinct class—the teacher must, at least in my opinion, use, not as authority to sustain a doubtful usage, but rather as warnings, to emphasize the necessity for that incessant care which is the necessary price of accuracy in any line of human effort. Our best and most careful writers make mistakes; and that is all there is to it. Once begin to argue that the recurrence of a given error in a dozen of our best writers establishes it as good usage, and there is no line that can be drawn between the admissible and the inadmissible. For example, perhaps the error most prevalent throughout the country is that of the substitution of *will* for *shall*. Teachers, clergymen, college professors (even Professor Kellogg is guilty of “I would like”), literary men, all are guilty of it. Will any one argue that such consent establishes as good usage what is a flagrant violation of grammatical propriety? I have a better opinion of American scholarship than to believe any such thing. A few of the citations criticised may, perhaps, have slightly better authority; but all except one or two of them condemn errors which are manifestly such, by all the canons of grammatical and rhetorical purity.

I do not, of course, urge that an expression to be permissible must “parse,” or must necessarily conform to the rules of analogy of the language. Quite the contrary. Language is a growth, and growth is very apt to be irregular. At the same time, there is such a thing as diseased growth. If errors persist in spite of our best efforts to eradicate them, our only course is to redouble our efforts. The stubborn persistence of sin in the world is never urged as an excuse for relaxing endeavors to crush it; and we should deal with these sins against purity of language as with sins in the moral world.

I am very truly yours,

*Charles B. Gleason.*

*Union High School, Redlands, Cal., March 18, 1893.*

#### “COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS IN GREEK.”

*Editor School Review:*

SIR—In my article on *College Requirements in Greek* in the February number of *THE SCHOOL REVIEW* I find that I committed the very serious and apparently inexcusable error of classing Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin, among the colleges for which the preparation in Greek requires a year or less (vid. p. 77). As I now find, the requirement is, and for the past thir-

teen years has been, such as to demand two full years' study, and in recent years has included two books of the *Iliad*. It is particularly unfortunate that by such an error any recognition should be withheld from an institution which, at the risk of considerable disadvantage, has persisted in defending the highest standards.

Benj. Ide Wheeler.

Ithaca, April 3, 1893.

"BIOLOGY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS."

*Editor School Review :*

SIR—The article on *Biology in Secondary Schools*, by President Coulter, which appeared in the March number of the REVIEW, suggests some questions and criticisms. First, as to minor points : Why should the term natural history be abandoned as synonymous with biology ? It has always included mineralogy and geology. Under what stretching of the term can these fall under biology ? Why is the current use of biology a misapplication ? Everyone knows that it means human physiology, and I take it that all subjects still have some relation to the human element as the most important in the scheme of education. Is it not trivial to object to a use which no one misunderstands ? I fear our professional scientists are more concerned over the inaccuracies of others than of their own, as the botanists' frequent misuse of the words grain, corn, and honey—to take very homely illustrations—shows.

Secondly, what injustice is done to children by teaching them to think that botany is the study of flowers ? Children do not—nay, cannot—study botany at all ; they merely learn elementary facts about plants, which pave the way for botany later on, and my experience has been that flowers still serve as the best introduction to the subject for them.

Dr. Coulter further mistakes, when he says that "a buttercup is . . . not so fit a subject for elementary study," as "a moss, or a toadstool, or a seaweed." There is a psychological principle followed in teaching, which says, proceed from the known to the unknown. The greater the step from one to the other, the greater the difficulty of taking it. Now, when one uses the word "plant", the average individual (perhaps the average botanist) immediately thinks of an object with root, stem, and green leaves, rather than of mycelium or thallus and conceptacles. So the child, and hence the step from the conventional plant to the specialized buttercup is easier than from the former to the toadstool, moss, or seaweed. To be sure, the child does not *understand* the buttercup. Is Dr. Coulter willing to say that *he* does ?